

# Editorial

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*By Melvia A. Hasman*

In this issue, we feature articles dealing with several skill areas and three topics that are special to me. Our American Studies section focuses on the diversity of the Native Americans in the United States. Growing up in Alaska, I was fascinated with the Aleuts living in Seward. These people are the native inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands in western Alaska. Although the Russians first called these maritime hunters "Aleuts," the meaning of which is unknown, they call themselves unangan ("the people"). As an adult, I often traveled across Mount Hood into eastern Oregon's vast high desert to stay at the Warm Springs Indian Reservation resort, Kah-Nee-Tah. There I watched tribal dances, enjoyed traditional foods, and spent several wonderful weekends hiking and horseback riding. Many Native American tribes have developed such tourist facilities on their reservations as a way of creating jobs and making money. I loved seeing the hundreds of Indians in full regalia at the annual Pendleton Round-Up, a rodeo in Oregon where tribes throughout the region gather.

Our civic education selection is on developing cultural understanding, another favorite topic of mine. I have always been intrigued by different cultures and began collecting pen pals when I was in secondary school. At one point I was writing to 15 pen pals throughout the world. We learned that cultures view ideas from different perspectives, a valuable lesson.

Finally, I included information on public speaking in the News and Notes section. An English program in West Virginia has introduced public speaking as a method of developing English language skills. While researching this segment, I discovered several Internet sites, including Toastmasters, an organization devoted to promoting public speaking. The site has a host of ideas on how to prepare and give speeches, information that I could have used in my public speaking days. Teachers can also find information on how to organize speech clubs and public speaking courses.

Three diverse topics, but with a single focus on understanding and communicating!